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INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT
(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference OPP031017KR	FOR FURTHER ACTION See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416)	
International application No. PCT/KR2003/001911	International filing date (day/month/year) 18 SEPTEMBER 2003 (18.09.2003)	Priority date (day/month/year) 18 SEPTEMBER 2002 (18.09.2002)
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC IPC7 G06F 17/60		
Applicant KTFREETEL CO., LTD. et al		

1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.
2. This REPORT consists of a total of 3 sheets, including this cover sheet.
- ☒ This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e., sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).
- These annexes consist of a total of 10 sheets.

3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:
- I ☒ Basis of the report
 - II ☐ Priority
 - III ☐ Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
 - IV ☐ Lack of unity of invention
 - V ☒ Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
 - VI ☐ Certain documents cited
 - VII ☐ Certain defects in the international application
 - VIII ☐ Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand 17 FEBRUARY 2004 (17.02.2004)	Date of completion of this report 05 JANUARY 2005 (05.01.2005)
Name and mailing address of the IPEA/KR Korean Intellectual Property Office 920 Dunsan-dong, Seo-gu, Daejeon 302-701, Republic of Korea Facsimile No. 82-42-472-7140	Authorized officer KANG, Gab Youn Telephone No. 82-42-481-5914

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No.

PCT/KR2003/001911

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the elements of the international application:*

- ☐ the international application as originally filed
- ☒ the description:
 pages 1-4 8-23, as originally filed
 pages _____, filed with the demand
 pages 5-7, filed with the letter of 22.10.2004
- ☒ the claims:
 pages _____, as originally filed
 pages _____, as amended (together with any statement) under Article 19
 pages _____, filed with the demand
 pages 24-30, filed with the letter of 22.10.2004
- ☒ the drawings:
 pages 1/10-10/10, as originally filed
 pages _____, filed with the demand
 pages _____, filed with the letter of _____
- ☐ the sequence listing part of the description:
 pages _____, as originally filed
 pages _____, filed with the demand
 pages _____, filed with the letter of _____

2. With regard to the language, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language English which is

- ☐ the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
- ☒ the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
- ☐ the language of the translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rules 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

- ☐ contained in the international application in written form.
- ☐ filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
- ☐ furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
- ☐ The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
- ☐ The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished.

4. ☐ The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- ☐ the description, pages _____
- ☐ the claims, Nos. _____
- ☐ the drawings, sheets _____

5. ☐ This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).**

* Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this opinion as "originally filed." and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17).

** Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item I and annexed to this report.

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

International application No.

PCT/KR2003/001911

V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement

1. Statement

Novelty (N)	Claims	1-23	YES
	Claims	None	NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claims	None	YES
	Claims	1-23	NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims	1-23	YES
	Claims	None	NO

2. Citations and explanations (Rule 70.7)

In the amendments filed on 22 October 2004, the applicant alleges that the present invention differs from the cited inventions.

The following document cited in the International Search Report has been considered for the purpose of this report:

D1=KR 2000-63726 A (6 November 2000)

In the letter filed with said amendments, the applicant argues that the present invention involves an inventive step. However, the present invention is similar to the invention of D1 in several aspects. First, both inventions are similar in the purpose of providing a method for purchasing, receiving and using an electronic gift certificate only using an arbitrary communication means without using an additional means. Second, both inventions are similar in the technical features and effects. In other words, the features of the present invention, namely, purchasing an electronic gift certificate using a mobile terminal, transmitting the information on the purchased electronic gift certificate to the mobile terminal through a message, and using the electronic gift certificate by using the information on the electronic gift certificate stored in the mobile terminal, are similar to those of D1, that is, purchasing an electronic gift certificate by using an arbitrary communication means through a purchaser's terminal, notifying the purchase of the gift certificate to the receiver's terminal by ARS, the receiver's inputting in a gift certificate management server by using his/her terminal whether or not receiving the corresponding gift certificate and the password for using the gift certificate when receiving it, and using the electronic gift certificate by inputting the actual receiver's mobile communication membership ID number and the password for using the certificate.

Therefore, the technical features of the present invention can be acquired by a simple change in design of those of D1. Therefore, the subject matter of the present application is considered to lack an inventive step.

accurately purchase, gift, and use the electronic gift certificate.

In one aspect of the present invention, an electronic gift certificate circulating method for a gift certificate service system including a gift certificate database and a gift certificate service server to manage sales of the electronic gift certificates according to requests by a communication terminal through wired and wireless networks, comprises: (a) receiving a user's purchase request from the communication terminal; (b) checking a settlement state of the electronic gift certificate bought by the user; (c) settling the electronic gift certificate bought by the user, and issuing the bought electronic gift certificate to the user, when the user requests settlement; (d) storing the issued gift certificate information in the gift certificate database; and (e) notifying the user of the gift certificate purchase particulars in a message format.

In another aspect of the present invention, an electronic gift certificate circulating method for a gift certificate service system including a gift certificate database and a gift certificate service server to manage gifting of the electronic gift certificates according to requests by a communication terminal through wired and wireless networks, comprises: (a) receiving a user's gifting request from the communication terminal; (b) inquiring an existence state of the gift certificate possessed by the user of the gift certificate database, and determining the existence state; (c) receiving information on the gift certificate to be gifted and a transferee when the user's gift certificate is found; (d) transmitting the gift certificate selected by the user to the transferee; (e) updating the user's gift certificate

information, storing the updated information in the gift certificate database together with the transferee's gift certificate information; and (f) notifying the user of the gift certificate gifting information in the message format.

In still another aspect of the present invention, an electronic gift certificate circulating method for a gift certificate service system including a gift certificate database and a gift certificate service server to manage usage of the electronic gift certificates according to requests by a communication terminal through wired and wireless networks, comprises:

(a) receiving the user's usage request from the communication terminal; (b) inquiring the gift certificate database of an existence state of the gift certificate possessed by the user, and determining the existence state; (c) settling the price with the gift certificate and determining whether the settlement is possible; (d) allowing the usage of the gift certificate to process the settlement on the price information when the settlement is possible; (e) settling the user's gift certificate information, updating the settlement information, and storing the updated information in the gift certificate database; and (f) notifying the user of the gift certificate usage information in the message format.

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BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The accompanying drawings, which are incorporated in and constitute a part of the specification, illustrate an embodiment of the invention, and, together with the description, serve to explain the principles

of the invention:

FIG. 1 shows an electronic gift certificate circulation system according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 2 shows a flowchart for selling electronic gift certificates according to a first preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 3 shows a flowchart for gifting electronic gift certificates according to a second preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 4 shows a flowchart for using electronic gift certificates according to a third preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 5 shows service patterns of a product mall displayed on the communication terminal, that is, a mobile user interface according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 6 shows a process for buying a gift certificate using a communication terminal as a mobile user interface according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 7 shows a process for referring to a gift certificate using a communication terminal as a mobile user interface according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 8 shows a process for gifting a gift certificate using a communication terminal as a mobile user interface according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 9 shows a process for checking a shopping basket using a communication terminal as a mobile user interface according to a preferred embodiment of the present invention; and

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A gift certificate service system for managing sales, gifting, and usage of electronic gift certificates according to a request by a user's communication terminal through a wired/wireless network, comprising:

5 a gift certificate service server for managing purchase, gifting, and usage operations on the electronic gift certificates from the communication terminal;

 a gift certificate database, accessed to the gift certificate service server, for storing electronic gift certificate information, and processing a
10 reply to an inquiry of electronic gift certificate usage from the gift certificate service server; and

 a network server, accessed to the gift certificate service server and accessed to the user's communication terminal through the wired/wireless network, for performing a client interface function on the purchase, gifting,
15 and usage on the electronic gift certificates.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the gift certificate service server comprises:

 means for receiving a user's purchase request from the communication terminal;

20 means for checking a settlement state of the electronic gift certificate bought by the user;

 means for settling the electronic gift certificate bought by the user, and issuing the bought electronic gift certificate to the user, when the user requests settlement;

means for storing the issued gift certificate information in the gift certificate database; and

means for notifying the user of the gift certificate purchase particulars in a message format.

5 3. The system of claim 1, wherein the gift certificate service server comprises:

means for receiving a user's gifting request from the communication terminal;

10 means for inquiring an existence state of the gift certificate possessed by the user of the gift certificate database, and determining the existence state;

means for receiving information on the gift certificate to be gifted and a transferee when the user's gift certificate is found;

15 means for transmitting the gift certificate selected by the user to the transferee;

means for updating the user's gift certificate information, storing the updated information in the gift certificate database together with the transferee's gift certificate information; and

20 means for notifying the user of the gift certificate gifting information in the message format.

4. The system of claim 1, comprising:

means for receiving the user's usage request from the communication terminal;

means for inquiring the gift certificate database of an existence

state of the gift certificate possessed by the user, and determining the existence state;

means for settling the price with the gift certificate and determining whether the settlement is possible;

5 means for allowing the usage of the gift certificate to process the settlement on the price information when the settlement is possible;

means for settling the user's gift certificate information, updating the settlement information, and storing the updated information in the gift certificate database; and

10 means for notifying the user of the gift certificate usage information in the message format.

5. An electronic gift certificate circulating method for a gift certificate service system including a gift certificate database and a gift certificate service server to manage sales of the electronic gift certificates according to requests by a communication terminal through wired and
15 wireless networks, comprising:

(a) receiving a user's purchase request from the communication terminal;

(b) checking a settlement state of the electronic gift certificate bought by the user;
20

(c) settling the electronic gift certificate bought by the user, and issuing the bought electronic gift certificate to the user, when the user requests settlement;

(d) storing the issued gift certificate information in the gift certificate

database; and

(e) notifying the user of the gift certificate purchase particulars in a message format.

5 6. The method of claim 5, further comprising: checking the user's membership authentication state.

7. The method of claim 5, wherein in (a), the purchase request includes information on a category of the gift certificates desired by the user, a price, and a number of sheets.

10 8. The method of claim 5, wherein in (c), the settlement price of the bought electronic gift certificate is summed with the user's communication terminal usage fee, and the summed price and fee are then settled.

9. The method of claim 5, wherein in (e), the message format includes the SMS (short message service) format and the MMS (multimedia message service) format.

15 10. An electronic gift certificate circulating method for a gift certificate service system including a gift certificate database and a gift certificate service server to manage gifting of the electronic gift certificates according to requests by a communication terminal through wired and wireless networks, comprising:

20 (a) receiving a user's gifting request from the communication terminal;

(b) inquiring an existence state of the gift certificate possessed by the user of the gift certificate database, and determining the existence state;

(c) receiving information on the gift certificate to be gifted and a

transferee when the user's gift certificate is found;

(d) transmitting the gift certificate selected by the user to the transferee;

(e) updating the user's gift certificate information, storing the updated information in the gift certificate database together with the transferee's gift certificate information; and

(f) notifying the user of the gift certificate gifting information in the message format.

11. The method of claim 10, further comprising: checking the user's membership authentication state between (a) and (b), and

further comprising: performing a gift certificate buying process when the user has no gift certificate in (b).

12. The method of claim 10, further comprising: determining whether an additional gift to be transmitted together with the gift certificate is provided, and receiving corresponding information when the additional gift is found according to the determination, after (c), and

transmitting the gift certificate and the additional gift to the transferee in (d).

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the additional gift includes a bell sound, a theme card, background music, and a character.

14. The method of claim 10, wherein in (f), the message format includes the SMS (short message service) format and the MMS (multimedia message service) format.

15. An electronic gift certificate circulating method for a gift

certificate service system including a gift certificate database and a gift certificate service server to manage usage of the electronic gift certificates according to requests by a communication terminal through wired and wireless networks, comprising:

5 (a) receiving the user's usage request from the communication terminal;

(b) inquiring the gift certificate database of an existence state of the gift certificate possessed by the user, and determining the existence state;

(c) settling the price with the gift certificate and determining whether
10 the settlement is possible;

(d) allowing the usage of the gift certificate to process the settlement on the price information when the settlement is possible;

(e) settling the user's gift certificate information, updating the settlement information, and storing the updated information in the gift
15 certificate database; and

(f) notifying the user of the gift certificate usage information in the message format.

16. The method of claim 15, further comprising: checking the user's membership authentication state between (a) and (b), and

20 further comprising: performing a gift certificate buying process when the user has no gift certificate in (b).

17. The method of claim 15, wherein in (f), the message format includes the SMS (short message service) format and the MMS (multimedia message service) format.

18. The method of claim 15, wherein in (a), the usage request is transmitted from the user's mobile communication terminal.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the mobile communication terminal has a credit card function therein.

5 20. The method of claim 15, wherein in (a), the usage request is transmitted from a chain store's card terminal according to a card usage by the user.

 21. The method of claim 20, wherein the user's card is a membership card for membership authentication by service providers including a communication service provider and a distribution company.

10 22. The method of claim 20, wherein the user's card is a brand card.

 23. The method of claim 15, wherein in (a), the usage request is transmitted from an online shop when the user buys a desired product at the online shop including an online shopping mall and requires an online settlement using the gift certificate.